

THE COURIER



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LEAH STRUDWICK

SLA Toronto President-Elect



Leah is the Reference & Outreach Librarian at the Toronto Lawyers Association, where she assists the TLA's lawyers and law students with research and reference. Previously, Leah worked as a Legal Librarian with the City of Toronto, a Reference Librarian at the Bronfman Business Library at York University, and as the Library Assistant in a corporate pharmaceutical library. Leah earned her Master of Information from the University of Toronto in 2015, after completing her Bachelor's Degree in Sociology at the University of Alberta. She has experience planning events for the Master of Information Student Council. She has been on the SLA Toronto Executive Board since 2016, and is excited to serve as President in 2018.

PRESIDENT-ELECT YEAR IN REVIEW (OR, HOW I LEARNED TO STOP WORRYING AND LOVE THE IDEA THAT I AM GOING TO BE PRESIDENT VERY SOON)

Leah Strudwick, SLA Toronto President-Elect

How is it possible that 2017 is over?! I frankly loved my year as President-Elect – I helped the Conference Committee plan and put on SLA Toronto's first professional development conference, enjoyed schmoozing with SLA Executive Director Amy Burke at the Member Appreciation Soiree, and saw familiar faces and met new friends at last night's wildly successful Inter-Association Holiday Social.

The unofficial Word of the Year for the 2017 SLA Toronto Executive Board was MORE: our goal was to plan more events, solicit more member feedback, communicate more smoothly, and achieve more member engagement. In my opinion, we matched our output to this overarching idea – there was undeniably more activity, more participation, and more interest. My hope is that we can keep this momentum going, and build on it, in 2018. As information experts we know: we're better when we work together, and I'm looking forward to seeing the ways in which the Board and members of SLA Toronto will grow and improve, both individually and collectively.

My sincere thanks to outgoing Treasurer Sarah McCabe, who balanced SLA Toronto's books, and streamlined every process involved in our accounting, for two years! We'll miss you, Sarah (but see you on the Advisory Board soon). Past President Bernadette Roca is also leaving the SLA Toronto team – good luck in your future endeavors, Bernadette.

And thanks most especially to outgoing President Christine DeLuca, for her fearless leadership through not one but two years of challenges.

She has been the glue that has held our team together, and while she will remain on the Board as Past President, we'll miss her confident leadership at the helm of the team. Thank you, Christine!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Christine DeLuca, SLA Toronto President

Welcome to another edition of The Courier! I cannot believe another year is coming to an end! It has truly been an honour to serve as your President for the last two years. The 77th year of SLA Toronto has been one of fun, learning and exploration.

By the end of the year, Programming Director Mary Gu will have led in the development and execution of 17 events, including the Holiday Social! The programming strategy for this year has been to provide hands-on skills and learning based opportunities for the membership. Through Mary's hard work, these events covered a wide range of professional development skills and topics such as design thinking, digital preservation, and information governance, as well as some purely social events. For example, Mary, along with Kathryn Kingston, our Membership Director, put together our very special Membership Appreciation Event and Summer Social, where we had the opportunity to host SLA Executive Director Amy Burke. From the photos, it is clear that a great time was had by all!

On March 31, 2017, the SLA-Toronto Chapter held a one-day Leadership and Management Conference. Behind the scenes, the conference committee members worked tirelessly to make this conference a valuable and rewarding experience for all attendees. Over 45 attendees went to sessions on topics such as soft skills, strategic planning, and demonstrating ROI. The conference received excellent comments and feedback. Thank you again committee members!

I would like to take a moment to thank each of my other fellow Board members for the past year: Leah Strudwick, Bernadette Roca, Mary Gu, Sarah McCabe, Alex Herd, Sarah Morrison, Kathryn Kingston, Jessica Hanley, and Zena Applebaum. Thank you for your time and commitment to our chapter! Many of you went above and beyond making this a very smooth second year for me and for that, I am truly grateful!

While I am sad to see this year end, I am very excited that I will be leaving you in the capable hands of Leah Strudwick and Mary Gu. Over this year, I have watched Leah gain confidence and turn into a real leader. She is always willing to pitch in and I know she is someone that Chapter and Board members can turn to when they need help. With Mary and her meticulous attention to detail and stellar organizational skills by Leah's side, I know that we can all look forward to a terrific year ahead!

If I could teach my January 2016 self one thing before beginning in this adventure, it would be not to be afraid of making mistakes. Some of the things I considered to be my biggest mistakes, have actually turned into some of the best learning moments for me in my professional career. SLA Toronto has taught me how to be the professional I really want to be.

Thank you, SLA Toronto members, for continuing to support and actively participate in our Chapter. We truly wouldn't be where we are without your continued involvement.

CHRISTINE DELUCA

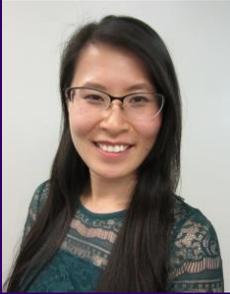
SLA Toronto President



Christine currently holds the position of Law Librarian at Bennett Jones LLP where she answers a variety of research questions and provides support in respect to practice planning and competitive intelligence. In the past, Christine worked at Bora Laskin Law Library and participated in a practicum placement at the Library of Parliament in Ottawa. In 2011, she graduated from the University of Toronto with a Master of Information. Christine has held various positions in SLA Toronto including Registrar, Membership Director, First Five Years Director, and Secretary.

MARY GU

SLA Toronto Programming
Director



Mary Gu is the Project Coordinator for an archive and record retention project at CPA Canada, a non-profit organization supporting the Canadian accounting profession at the national level. Working with the Research, Guidance, and Support department, Mary is developing a record management program and initiating an organizational archive, as well as assisting with the Information Services Office. Mary received her Honours Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from the University of Western Ontario and her Master of Information from the University of Toronto. She has been a member of SLA since her graduate student days and is excited to be engaged as the Programming Director for 2017. She will be President-Elect in 2018.

FUTURE PRESIDENT-ELECT'S MESSAGE

Mary Gu, Programming Director

It has been a whirlwind year of being the SLA Toronto Chapter Programming Director.

In 2017, with the help of my registrar team and other board members, SLA Toronto executed 17 events!

That's not even counting the one-day conference executed by the conference planning team. It's impossible to look back and choose one single event or experience as a highlight of my year. In reality, the highlight of my year has been the wonderful people on the Executive Board and on the Advisory Board. The 2017 events ran all the smoother with these people volunteering their time!

A huge thank you goes out to my registrar team:

- Ricardo Laskaris
- Jonathan Leroux
- Annmarie Uleryk
- Emily Deere
- Holly Inglis
- Rita Egede
- Jordana Winegust

Another big thank you goes out to the Joint Holiday Social planning committee for all your time spent on teleconferences, sending emails, discussing ideas, and, ultimately, coming together to throw a lovely and festive holiday party for the special libraries community:

- Kathryn Kingston, SLA Toronto
- Jessica Hanley, SLA Toronto
- Jessie Cunningham, THLA
- Maggie Tiong, OLA-SLC
- Ashleigh Graden, FIAA

In 2018, Jessica Samuels will be taking over as Programming Director and I am so thrilled that she agreed to take on this position. I first had had the pleasure of working with her while we were both on the Master of Information Student Council at the Faculty of Information, University of Toronto. I know that she will do a spectacular job.

See you all in 2018, when I'll be taking over as President-Elect!

TRENDING

THE CONTINUING RELEVANCE OF OPEN ACCESS

Samantha Elmsley

Most hours of my Business Information Resources course were spent desperately trying to master very useful (and probably very expensive) databases like Factiva, CB Insights and the like. When tackling the weekly “reference questions”, it became second nature for me to head to the business resources guide on the library homepage, and choose one such database to dive into. So it was difficult to shake off my newly-acquired habits when our instructors held a class exclusively on free tools like Google Finance, personal blogs, and other more time-consuming but cost-effective resources. Both academic business librarians, they speculated that students often default to expensive databases that a university can typically provide, but that may not be available to them when they enter the workplace.

Enter open access (OA), which Peter Suber defines as literature that is “digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions” (2004). Though much of the library literature around OA revolves around journal articles, resources like open data also have a role to play in any special library squeezed for cash.

OA isn't exactly a new trend in special librarianship. In her 2015 article analyzing trends by looking at SLA Conference content, Tara Murray found that “open access was a theme of several sessions in 2005” while “in 2015, open access and open data were still on librarians' minds” (p.663). Any role for open access in special libraries will change from organization to organization, depending on the information needs of the group. As Milles (2006) writes in his article on open access and legal information resources, while legal scholarship is already fairly easily available, the “increasing cost of commercially published materials intended primarily for practitioners and the law firm market” presents a problem that open access could solve (p. 634). To take another example, while peer-reviewed journal articles are crucial to the operation of a hospital library, a researcher at a start-up may be more interested in company or industry reports.

Whatever the information need, special libraries making use of open access resources share a common denominator: while the resource itself may be free, the time cost of sourcing and evaluating the information might be steeper than with traditional resources. Take blogs, for example: a researcher looking for an analysis of Toronto's real estate market has a lot of opinions to choose from when venturing online. Parsing the authoritative voices from the unreliable, and the solid data from the unusably biased, takes a relatively deep knowledge of the field, as well as critical engagement during the research process. For special librarians, this means channeling our inner Mad-Eye (“CONSTANT VIGILANCE!”) when conducting research, and teaching critical information literacy skills to our users whenever possible.

Of course, these skills are essential whether the resources we're using are open or closed. However, now that publishing is achievable for anyone with an internet connection, it is more important than ever that those skills stay sharp.

SAMANTHA ELMSLEY



Samantha Elmsley is a recent Master of Information graduate from the University of Toronto, with a focus in library science and knowledge management. When not in a library, you can find her at the farmer's market, in a canoe, and (of course) reading. You can find her on [LinkedIn](#).

FROM THE LAPTOP OF THE EDITOR

Now is the time for thank yous!

- Thanks to Samantha Elmsley and Ewere Rita Egede for jumping in and volunteering for the Courier. I couldn't have done it without you!
- Thanks to Christine DeLuca and Leah Strudwick for their guidance and leadership (and patience).
- Thanks to Mary Gu for collaborating with me on so many things.
- Thanks to Tylene Reaume for all her hard work on our Social Media.
- Thanks to the rest of the Executive for a great year!

Have a great holiday season, and here's to a fantastic 2018!

- Sarah Morrison, SLA
Toronto Technology &
Communications Director

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Murray, T. (2015). Trends in special libraries: Observations based on conference content. *Journal of Library Administration* 55(8): 658-666. DOI: 10.1080/01930826.2015.1085249.

Suber, P. (5 Dec. 2015). Open Access Overview. Retrieved from <https://legacy.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/overview.htm>

EVENTS UPDATES

Joint Holiday Social 2017: If It Ain't Broke...

The 2017 Holiday Social witnessed the return of FIAA, THLA, OLA-SLC, and SLA members and their friends to the beautiful Arts & Letters Club space. The beautifully decorated and softly lit rooms provided an ideal setting for attendees of this much anticipated annual event to catch up on where their careers and lives had taken them over the past year. I spent the evening introducing my Holiday Social buddy around the room, snacking on delicious food, and enjoying re-acquainting myself with old friends and striking up conversations with new ones.

The door prizes were, to no-one's surprise, a highlight of the evening, but my favorite moment by far was seeing the look of dawning realization on Jonathan Leroux's face as he was awarded SLA Member of the Year. Congratulations again, Jon!

And thank you sincerely to all those who attended – I look forward to seeing you again soon!

Be sure to check out [pictures from the Joint Holiday Social 2017](#) from Becca Lemire Photography!

2017 AGM Webcast Recording

Thank you to everyone who was able to tune into the AGM on November 23rd, 2017. Available for download is the video file of the AGM. In the meeting we covered our achievements in 2017, announced a well deserving award winner, and announced our 2018 Board.

To download the recording, please click below:

[2017-11-23 SLA Toronto 2017 AGM Webinar](#)

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVOURITE MOMENT OF 2017?

Sarah McCabe, SLA Toronto Treasurer:

One of my favourite SLA moments from 2017 was at our March "Design Thinking for Info Pros" workshop, led by Bernadette Roca, when we were asked to draw as many different apples as we could in a short period of time. The exercise got me thinking about creativity and preconceptions, and how to use your imagination for new ideas. A great workshop!

Sarah Morrison, SLA Toronto Technology & Communications Director:

Mine was the first edition of the relaunched Courier! It all came together in the end, with contributions from different types of information professionals and input from our membership. I'm so proud of how it turned out, and I can't wait to publish more in 2018.

ABOUT US

SLA Toronto was founded in 1940 and represents the interests of information professionals in Toronto and most of the province of Ontario, west of Kingston.

The Toronto Chapter is a dynamic and active organization with over 400 members and is part of [SLA](#), an international organization headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia.

We provide an opportunity for information professionals in our area to learn and network at [events](#) as well as engage on [social media sites](#).

The chapter is volunteer led by an [Executive Board](#), consisting of a President, Past-President, President-Elect, Treasurer, Secretary, Technology & Communications Director, Membership Director, First Five Years Director, Programming Director, and a Partner Relations Director. The chapter is also guided and supported by an [Advisory Board](#).

WANT TO WRITE FOR THE COURIER?

We want to hear from you! Email the editor, Sarah Morrison, at [sarah \[at\] sarahamorrison \[dot\] net](mailto:sarah[at]sarahamorrison[dot]net) with your idea.